REMARKS

Claims 1-46 are pending in the application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 2, the Office Action rejects claims 1-46 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Hoover et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,724,575). Applicants traverse these rejections for the following reasons.

Claim 1 describes a method for performing a clean operation on an input table having an input table name. The method comprises receiving at least one rule definition, wherein each rule definition indicates a find criteria, a replacement value, and an input data column in the input table; searching, for each rule definition, the input data column for any fields that match the find criteria; and inserting, for each rule definition, the replacement value in the fields in the input data column that match the find criteria, wherein subsequent applications of additional rule definitions applied to the same input data column operate on replacement values inserted in the input data column in previously applied rule definitions.

Hoover describes "mapping predetermined data fields items stored in the heterogeneous user computers to corresponding object attributes associated with a predetermined instance of an object." (Col. 6, lns. 14-17) Hoover describes a homogenization operation that "involves mapping fields or data items in the heterogeneous data structures into object attributes in the object attribute tables, and then performing an 'add' operation." (Col. 6, lns. 61-64) According to Hoover, "in a relational model, the data is arranged in one or more tables, while in an object-oriented model, the data is organized as objects which communication the form of a request and/or response messages." (Col. 17, lns. 61-64). In Hoover, "FIGS. 19A-19B is a Person Put specification table comprising a state diagram summarizing all possible state conditions for an exemplary PERSON object, as it operates upon a structure file such as the exemplary structure file 300 of FIGS. 18A-18C to 'put' the data into the system." (Col. 46, lns. 26-32)

The Examiner cited Col. 51, lines 14-16 and Col. 54, lines 26-33; Col. 35, lns. 21-31; and, Col. 43-64 (Office Action, pg. 2) as disclosing "receiving at least one rule definition, wherein each rule definition indicates a find criteria, a replacement value, and an input data column in the input table." The cited text at Ccl. 51, lines 14-15 and Col. 54, lines 26-33

describes "a list of possible matches" and issuing a "GET message to retrieve demographic data." The cited text at Col. 35, lns. 21-31 describes a " 'commit' operation that causes data to be entered to replace existing data (only in the requesting remote database)."

Together, the various portions of cited text do not teach or suggest Applicants' claimed element of "receiving at least one rule definition, wherein each rule definition indicates a find criteria, a replacement value, and an input data column in the input table." Instead, the cited text merely describes portions of Hoover that, when combined, do not result in Applicants' claimed invention. Instead, the cited text together describes "a list of possible matches," a "GET message to retrieve demographic data," and a " 'commit' operation that causes data to be entered to replace existing data (only in the requesting remote database)."

The Examiner cited Col. 46, lns. 40-50 (Office Action, pg. 2) as describing "searching, for each rule definition, the input data column for any fields that match the find criteria." The text cited at Col. 46, lns. 40-50 merely lists columns in a state table. The cited text does not teach or describe searching an input data column for a rule definition as claimed in claim 1.

Additionally, the Examiner states that "Hoover does not clearly discloses 'inserting, for each rule definition, the replacement value in the fields that match the find criteria, wherein subsequent applications of additional rule definitions applied to the same input data column operate on replacement values inserted in the input data column in previously applied rule definitions." The Examiner further states that "however, Hoover shows in figures 19A-19B the columns from left to right . . . Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ the taught for inserting, for each rule definition, the replacement value in the fields in the input data column that match the find criteria, wherein subsequent applications of additional rule definitions applied to the same input data column operate on replacement values inserted in the input data column in previously applied rule definitions because when the search is matched with the criteria, the system is transforming the data and replacing the data into the match fields."

Hoover describes figures 19A-19B as "a Person Put specification table comprising a state diagram summarizing all possible state conditions for an exemplary PERSON object, as it

operates upon a structure file such as the exemplary structure file 300 of FIGS. 18A-18C to 'put' the data into the system." (Col. 46, lns. 26-32) The specification table of figures 19A-19B is used to put data into a system by "mapping fields or data items in the heterogeneous data structures into object attributes in the object attribute tables, and then performing an 'add' operation." (Col. 6, lns. 61-64) That is, Hoover describes a structure file and a state table that are used to put data into an object. On the other hand, the Applicants' invention describes "inserting . . . the replacement value in the fields in the input column that match the find criteria." That is, claim 1 describes replacing data in a table, while the Hoover patent describes generation of an object using data from a table. By teaching creation of an object to store data imported from a table, the Hoover patent teaches away from replacing data within a table as claimed.

Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over the cited art because Hoover does not teach or suggest the subject matter of claim 1.

Independent claims 14, 27, and 40 are not taught or suggested by Hoover for the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1. Dependent claims 2-13, 15-26, 28-39, and 41-46 are patentable over the cited art because they add additional novel elements and depend from claims 1, 14, 27, and 40, each of which is patentable over the cited art for the reasons discussed above.

For all the above reasons, Applicants submit that the pending claims 1-46 are patentable over the art of record and allowance is respectfully requested of claims 1-46. Applicants have not added any claims. Nonetheless, should any additional fees be required, please charge Deposit Account No. 09-0460.

The attorney of record invites the Examiner to contact her at (310) 553-7973 if the Examiner believes such contact would advance the prosecution of the case.

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          Janaki Komanduri
          Attorney for Applicants
          Reg. No.: 40,684

<u>Please direct all correspondences to</u>:

Janaki Komanduri
Konrad Raynes Victor & Mann, LLP
315 South Beverly Drive, Ste. 210
Beverly Hills, CA 90212
Tel: 310-553-7977
Fax: 310-556-7984